

# Remember What He Said

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon encourages believers to remember God's promises and remain faithful to their divine calling despite challenges and discouragements.*

**Duration:** 18:58

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:49, Matthew 6:33, 1 Timothy 1:18, 2 Timothy 1:6-7

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares the story of a woman who was painfully shy and afraid to speak in public. However, one day she had a vision where she saw herself directing people of different races singing and praising God. Despite her fear, she was encouraged to speak to a large audience and eventually became an evangelist. The preacher emphasizes the importance of not letting discouragement or past failures hinder one's calling and reminds the audience to remember the prophecies spoken over their lives.

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## Transcript

I just want to leave this thought with you about, this is very subtle, never spoken on it before, but God warmed my heart this afternoon with this passage. Paul is writing one of his last letters to his young disciple who is a pastor already, just younger than Paul, and he wants to remind him how to keep faithful to what God called you to do, what he called you to do, me to do, which is different in every case. And then he reminds him that not everybody does that.

Some people go south and don't make it in their calling from God. They fall prey to whatever. Let's look at it from Timothy.

Timothy, my son, I'm giving you this command about staying in Ephesus and ministering and being faithful in keeping with the prophecies that were once made about you so that by recalling them, you may fight the battle well, holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. That's a heavy passage, amen? Let's just look at the bottom part of it.

He says that not everybody has laid hold and held to the faith. He's encouraging Timothy to do it, but he says some have rejected, haven't held on to the faith and a good conscience and have made shipwreck

with regard to the faith, not just to their faith, but the faith, belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and the truth about him. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander.

There's two Alexanders that are mentioned in the New Testament. We're not sure if that is referring to any one of them, but it seems like these two people were leaders in the church, Hymenaeus and Alexander. Not much is known about them.

No one really knows what this means when he says, I've handed them over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. Some people connect that with 1 Corinthians 5, where Paul says about a certain person who's doing atrocious thing and won't listen to the word of God, about the church meeting together and excommunicating them. But beyond that, handing them over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.

We're not sure if he means the actual physical body or whether he means the sarks, the flesh, the fleshly nature, but why he would hand them over to Satan to do that. It's a very difficult passage and Christians of good faith and who love the Lord differ on their understanding of it. Here, he's talking about among them are Hymenaeus, also in 2 Thessalonians, this is also mentioned.

But among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, among whom the people have rejected the faith, walked away from it. And I've handed them over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. Did he do it in prayer? Did he do it in some kind of public way in the church? We're not sure.

And where the Bible is silent, we're silent. Since this was written to a church and we don't know who Hymenaeus and Alexander were and we don't know what Timothy knew about them, we're not with real clarity on this. But it's an ominous thing, isn't it? Paul is saying these people have made shipwreck of their faith and before they influence other people and pull them down, I've turned them over to Satan.

Some people believe it means, no, instead of being covered by the church and the blessing of God on the church of Christ, I've thrust them outside the church. I don't let them in the church, I thrust them out. And now Satan is going to teach them it's better to serve Jesus than it is to serve Satan.

It's a very, very difficult passage. I'm just telling you the truth. I could stand up here and preach one view and tell you that, but I'm not sure I totally understand all of that.

I just know I don't want to go there. How many are with me? Say amen. Like whatever, just God, keep us from that.

Now he's telling Timothy, I just want to leave this with you. I'm giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you. And the NIV here is very excellent.

Most translations have that so by them you may fight the battle well. But it's by recalling them, what? The prophecies that you may fight the battle well and hold on to your faith and a good conscience. There's also a couple of places where prophecies about Timothy are mentioned.

One time more later on in this book, I believe it's chapter four. And then also, I believe it's in second Timothy, where Paul is reminding Timothy, remember the prophetic words that were spoken over you. When did that happen? It seems as if when Timothy was ordained and hands were laid on him for the ministry, not only was a gift imparted to him for ministry through the Holy Spirit, but there was a prophetic utterance given to Paul or someone around there, or maybe a couple.

And they spoke it over Timothy about the call of God on his life and what God's purpose was for him. That must have been an awesome moment. Ordained, Paul's praying for you.

And now the Spirit speaks through human vessels and says, thus sayeth the Lord, such and such, such. What were those prophecies? Again, we have no idea. But what we do know is Paul is reminding Timothy of the prophecies.

That by recalling them, not by them as if they have power in themselves, but by recalling them. In other words, Timothy, I'm saying all those things so that I can remind you of the prophecies that were spoken over you so that by recalling them and remembering the preciousness of God's call on your life and what he wants you to do. Maybe some of it hasn't happened yet, Timothy, but Timothy, heads up, remember what God spoke.

He put his hand on you. He wants you to do something. It's kind of like Psalm 119, 49.

Remember your word to your servant, Lord, for you have given me hope. That's not a word of scripture. It's not remember your word that you spoke in the Bible.

Remember the psalmist, they had the books of the law, let's say. Genesis through Deuteronomy. So it's not that.

It seems to be a personal word like Paul got for his life. And Paul is reminding Timothy. Because when Paul got converted, Ananias came and laid hands on him, another Christian, because he had been blinded by his vision of the Lord, and spoke words of prophecy over him of what God was going to do through him and how God would be with him.

But it wouldn't always be easy. And that was to be filed away and remembered so that Paul could be encouraged when he was going through those hard times. Now, another prophecies, plural prophecies, were made over Timothy.

We're not privy to that. The psalmist in 119 is saying, remember your word to your servant, Lord. You remember what you said to me.

You've given me hope, which means it hadn't happened yet. You don't hope for something that's already happened. What am I saying here as I close? It's that in many of your lives tonight, I believe, there's been a moment in the past when God, maybe not through a verbal prophecy spoken publicly, but somehow God communicated something to your spirit of what he plans to do in and through you.

There are these sacred moments. They've been in my life. I believe they're in yours.

That's why I'm saying this and I'm closing. You got to hold on to those. You got to remember them and be inspired by them.

Don't let Satan rob them from you. Why would Paul said, I'm reminding you of the prophecies? He's saying it because it's possible to forget those things that God has spoken to you. You get so overwhelmed by discouragement and the cares of life.

You forget or failure or disappointment in yourself or a moral failure. And then you think, well, God can't use me. I'm not what I ought to be.

I'm not the good husband. I should be this, that, the other. And Paul's saying, no, no, listen, to fight the good fight that you have to fight.

You got to recall the things that God put in your heart. So a personal word, and it's easier for me to say it because she's not here tonight. When my wife was a little girl, she wasn't shy.

She was painfully, debilitatingly shy. Couldn't talk in public. If she didn't know people, she wouldn't speak.

So one day when she was a teenager, I think I told you when I went out with her on the date, her hands used to sweat so much that my hand kept slipping off her hand when I would hold it. Just every time I went, how are we going to move on with this here? It's the truth. Painfully, painfully shy.

None of you can even imagine. The woman that sometimes grabs the microphone and talks to you, you don't even have a clue to the battle she's been through. So one day when she was helping her mother make a bed in her house in New Jersey, she was by herself in the room, 13, 14, put the sheet over the bed to then tuck it in.

And in that second, God gave her a vision. And she saw herself, which is like a prophecy. And she saw herself from the back like you would see me.

And she saw herself, she knew it was her with her hair. And she saw people of all different races, all that singing their hearts out. And she was directing them, her shy little self who was afraid of her shadow.

She saw herself directing it. And then it was gone. And God just spoke to her.

That's what I want you to do one day. I want you to lead people to sing to me. I can't do that.

I'm not trained in music. I can't talk to people. I can't get up from a choir and run a practice.

No, listen. The first practice when we went in the ministry, we were in Newark. We weren't at Brooklyn.

She invited five women over to our house. My parents bought us in Maplewood, the down payment. Five women to gather around the piano.

My wife has perfect pitch. She can play. She was gonna teach them song.

Five women in the Newark Gospel Tabernacle. She didn't eat the whole day. Couldn't, didn't sleep the night before.

And after they left, she threw up. Just from pure nerves. None of you, none of you.

You think you have something holding you back? None of you even can understand. She has resigned from the choir at least 200 times. And I have not accepted one of those resignations.

How many in favor say amen, right? Amen. Why? Because she's forced to talk. And at first that was impossible.

When we rented Radio City Music Hall the first time, when they came up out of that pit up there and the smoke thing and the whole thing they put together. So after the first song, I knew I told her, you have to turn, grab the microphone and talk to the 6,000 people that are there. I can't.

I said, you have to. You have to. I can't.

Jim, why does God call me to do things I can't do? I just want to do music. I don't want to talk. You have to talk.

God came through. She talked. Now she's become an evangelist.

She's walking back and forth over here like she's out of control. Amen, right? Am I right? She spoke for the Assemblies of God General Council out in California a month or so ago with Chrissy, our daughter. And God so used her.

Now she's getting invitations to speak all over the place. And I told her, maybe I can just drive the bus and we can get a ministry and she'll preach and I'll just sell books in the back. My point was, many times I said to her, Carol, you can't quit.

Remember what you saw. If God showed you that, won't he help you to do it? Am I right or wrong here, brothers? In other words, Paul is saying to Timothy, remember what God spoke over your life. Maybe it hasn't happened yet.

Don't give up. Be encouraged by it. Fight the good fight.

Reconsecrate yourself to the Lord. If you have to do it 500 times, do it 500 times. But say, here am I, Lord.

Send me. Send me to Iraq. Send me to the South Bronx.

Send me wherever you want me to go. Use me here in the church. But God, I'm not going to let go.

I'm not going to let go of what you call me to do. Haven't you ever had moments where just no one, you never even shared it with anyone. But God put something in your heart.

You saw yourself or you just felt like, oh, I would long to do that. I would long. Who do you think put that in your head? The devil? The flesh? Never.

Those are sacred things. And Satan wants to rob them. I've had my own battles.

I try to resign twice from the ministry in the deepest days of discouragement. God blocked me twice. But he many times has reminded me, whoever I call, I will equip.

Doesn't matter how untrained you are, how old you are, what color you are. And all of that is nonsense. I write these things to you, Timothy, reminding you of the prophecies that were spoken over them by remembering them.

You could fight the good fight. Keep trusting God. God's going to use me.

Let's pray. The husband somewhere here and your marriage and your wife has so kind of torn you down and that you're almost ready to give up the hope of how God could use you. But he once showed that to you.

And now Satan is trying to say, no way, no way. I'm saying to you today, sir, my brother, whoever you are, remember that whatever God speaks, he doesn't retract it. The gifts and callings of God are with, they're without repentance.

He doesn't turn around and say, ah, you're not what I thought you would be. No, no, that thing is on you. Still hold on to it, fight through it.

Everybody here who feels like God has spoken, has called me in a way, maybe a prophetic word, maybe a dream, a vision, or a still small voice or something you just got a sense like, oh, wow, that's not from me. I think that's from God. But how, when? I'm not satisfied with my progress.

Will I ever be spiritual enough to do it? Listen, you just remember that God put that spark in you. Just surrender yourself again tonight and say, Lord, here am I, send me. You don't have to do anything.

Just say, send me. He'll open the doors. He'll make the way possible.

You don't have to figure that out. That's God's job. Anybody feel like that? Want to come up here and stand with me? As we get ready to dismiss, just come up.

Pastor, I want to resurrender my life to the calling that I know God put on my life. Let me say it better. I want to surrender my will and my heart to the calling that I know God put on my life.

I don't care if you're 80 years old or 18 years old. Just come and stand here. We're just going to pray.

We're going to surrender. You don't have to, just got to submit your heart. Open your heart and say, God, here am I. Lord, what can I, I can't do anything.

You're God. I'm just a man, a woman. But I stand and I affirm what you have shown me, what you spoke to me.

I affirm that. I cling to that tonight. Remember your word to your servant, Lord, for you have given me hope.

We say yes to your calling on our life, even if it's hard. Not what we plan, not what we thought. Fulfill your will for all of our lives, Lord, starting with me.

Lord, we thank you for your word to us tonight through first Timothy. Keep our hearts open to you now, Lord. We're going to leave the building, but we're not going to leave you.

Keep our hearts sensitive. Keep our spiritual antenna in the receive mode. So that you can speak and prompt and lead us.

Help us not to be carnal and worldly, but help us to be godly and spiritual. Get rid of those influences and things in our life that would hinder us from hearing from you. But we say yes, Lord.

We say yes, Lord. Digo si, Senor. Digo si, Senor.

Get us all home safely, Lord. Thank you for such a wonderful group of people that pray on Tuesdays, God. Let it increase.

Help us to be evangelists, to get others who love you to come and be in your house on Tuesday. Help us to love each other more so that men will know that we're your disciples. We pray in Jesus' name.

And everyone said. Turn around and hug a bunch of people, okay? Turn around and hug a bunch of people, okay?

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